

Chepachet Fire District

Executive Committee – Monthly Meeting

August 21st, 2013

The Chepachet Fire District monthly meeting was held at the Chepachet Fire Station on Wednesday, August 21st, 2013. Chairman Earl Newman called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm. Members present were Robert Lohr and Eric Croft. Also present were Treasurer David Steere, District Clerk/Secretary Darlene Shields, Chief Robert Dauphinais and Deputy Chief Dennis Huestis and Tax Collector Patricia Svansson. Absent was George Leonhardt.

Secretary's Report:

All members have received copies of the minutes for July 17th, 2013 Monthly Board Meeting.

Motion made by Mrs. Martone to accept the minutes as presented, second by Mr. Croft and passed 4-0.

VOTER YES NO Abstaining

Earl K Newman, Chairman X

Robert Lohr, Vice Chairman X

George Leonhardt

Lynda Martone X

Eric Croft X

Tax Collector's Report:

Mrs. Svansson provided update on the upcoming Tax Sale. As of today there are 41 remaining accounts that are on the Tax Sale List. On Friday 40 days notices will be mailed out by Attorney Glenn Carlson Office and at the same time the title search fees will be additional charged to be added on. 2013 tax books are in and the data has been moved onto to the computer and now the Tax Assessors will start to work on the tax roll books.

Motion made by Mr. Lohr to accept the Tax Collector's Annual Report, second by Mr. Croft and passed 4-0.

VOTER YES NO Abstaining

Earl K Newman, Chairman X

Robert Lohr, Vice Chairman X

George Leonhardt

Lynda Martone X

Eric Croft X

Treasurer Report:

Mr. Steere presented the Treasurer's Monthly Report for July 2013.

This is the first report for the new fiscal year.

Tax Collector collected a good substantial amount and with the good amount form 3rd party billing. Funds need to be shifted from communications so it will not show 132% expended to equipment repair. Mr. Newman questioned the interest on Navigant Money Market at \$139 a month for a \$200,000 money market in interest vs. \$2.39 at Citizens with \$315,000 in the PIP Account.

Last page of the report all the accounts show that we are in good shape. Third Party has a balance of \$287,000 with a \$100,000 coming out to support the new budget \$50,000 for new truck loan payment which leaves \$137,000 balance in that account.

Motion made by Mrs. Martone to accept the Treasurer's Annual Report as presented and to pay the monthly bills, second by Mr. Lohr and Passed 4-0.

VOTER YES NO Abstaining

Earl K Newman, Chairman X

Robert Lohr, Vice Chairman X

George Leonhardt

Lynda Martone X

Eric Croft X

Chief's Report:

Chief Dauphinais read and submitted the July 2013 Chief's Report to be placed on file.

Motion made by Mr. Newman to accept the Chief's Monthly Report for July 2013, second by Mr. Croft and passed 4-0.

VOTER YES NO Abstaining

Earl K Newman, Chairman X

Robert Lohr, Vice Chairman X

George Leonhardt

Lynda Martone X

Eric Croft X

Committee: no committees at this time

Old Business:

1. Investing: Table until Next Month

Motion made by Mr. Lohr and second by Mrs. Martone and passed 4-0.

VOTER YES NO Abstaining

Earl K Newman, Chairman X

Robert Lohr, Vice Chairman X

George Leonhardt

Lynda Martone X

Eric Croft X

New Business:

**Attorney Robert Craven in attendance for the August Monthly Meeting
at 6:42pm**

Introductions made to Mr. Craven for all in attendance.

**List of topics provided and attached with these minutes for propose
of discussion as to questions that have come up in
previous monthly meetings.**

1. Charter and By-Law Changes: Clarification on Changes to Charter and By-Laws

**Mrs. Shields advised that in 2007 there were Charter Changes made
to the Tax Collector, Treasurer, and District Clerk position from once
being elected positions to now being appointed positions and the
By-Laws also list the positions. The By-Laws were not updated. Mr.**

Craven stated the Charter is the law. A By-Laws committee needs to set up and advertised public meeting listing the changes to the By-Laws that the Board is looking to make. Advertising can be posting within the district as well as the State of RI website. Mr. Craven said the Board could include the By-Law changes in the Monthly Board Meeting as long as it is advertised on the agenda.

2. Investing: What can the Board do and not do with extra funds?

Mr. Craven said above all to be prudent. Never invest in anything speculative with money acquired through taxation. Mr. Craven best suggestion is to ask the Town of Glocester what they do with any extra surplus funds and what investments / vehicles do they use when investing surplus funds. Mr. Craven advised that you can only invest surplus funds not operating funds. Mr. Craven used examples if the Budget allows for funds to be set aside for future investments such as a new truck where money is being put aside for a future truck those funds can be invested. Mr. Craven advised that treasury bills would be a prudent and low risk investment.

Mr. Croft asked if the Board Member is personally liable there is lose in the investment. Mr. Craven advised that if the Board Members follow the Charter and By-Laws and decisions made within the guidelines of the Charter and By-Laws the Board Member are not liable. If a Board Member makes decisions outside the Charter and

By-Laws then a Board Member can be held liable.

Mrs. Shields stated that nowhere in the Charter or By-Law is there a section that discussed investments. Mrs. Shields questioned that should the Charter and or By-Law be changed and have investing guidelines listed prior to making any investments.

Mr. Craven advised again that contacting the Town of Gloucester to see what guidelines they use. Mr. Steere said he would contact the Town of Gloucester finance director and get some information on the Town of Gloucester guidelines.

3. Update on the Lawsuit at Pulaski Park / Legal Presentation at depositions

Mr. Craven advised that is does not appear they are inclined to dispose the witnesses. The lawsuit is at the end of the discovery stage and is about to close and depositions are done in the discovery stage of the trial. They could still call for depositions and to advise him if anyone does get a subpoena. Mr. Craven advised to contact him with all subpoena going forward and he will advise if he needs to be present at those depositions.

Most questions asked can be answered are yes, no or I don't know.

4. Changes in the Law the affect Fire District (Budget Caps)

Mr. Newman asked if there are any changes that would affect Budget Caps for Fire Districts. Mr. Craven stated as of now there are no caps. There is and has been talk but as of now no changes. Mr. Craven advised that he has been in on many meetings and until the State has more of an understanding on how Fire District operate then most likely changes are to come.

5. Law Changes for Fire District regarding Filing of Minutes

Mr. Craven did state that the minutes and agendas need to be posted on the website. Mrs. Shields advised that the District already complied with posting of the minutes and agendas. Also that minutes need show that each vote be recorded and shown in the minutes. Mr. Craven stated they each person's vote be recorded by name because people and come in late or leave early. Mr. Newman suggests just listed each vote by name. Mr. Shields has also noted that drafts of minutes need to be posted within 35 days and once the minutes are approved the final minutes be posted. Mr. Craven stated that is correct.

Mrs. Shields questions By-Law / Charter Committee meeting would also have to be posted and Mr. Craven stated yes.

6. Tax Assessment Warrant does not state 10 percent per ANNUM

Mrs. Shields asked if the Tax Assessment Warrant needs to state per ANNUM if that's what the district charges and does the change/correction to the Warrant need to be done in a meeting. Mr. Craven said that Warrant should state ANNUM if that what the Tax Bills State and on the next Warrant just to make the change no meeting needed to show make change/correction on the Warrant.

7. Street Lights as they pertain to the Charter

Mr. Newman questioned that the Charter states the Fire District is responsible to provided light in the District. The board has been asked by tax payers in the past to add additional lighting on some streets for different reason. The District stance is to not add any more lights to our bill and is now concerned that Town will asked the District to cover the cost of the new street lights they are being put in. Mr. Steere questioned if someone comes to the Board and wants to add a light or lights and because of our Charter states the District provides lighting does the District have to comply. Mr. Craven said that the only people who can tell you that would be the tax payers. Mr. Craven and Mr. Newman stated that it could be voted on at the Annual Meeting and or Special Advertised Meeting and the tax payers could either reject or approve additional lighting. Mr. Craven said that just because the charter says you can do something doesn't mean you have to do something. The District's concern is that the new lights are now going in and the Town has yet to contact the Fire

District for paying for the cost of lighting the new lights.

8. Centralization of Tax Collection with the State

Mr. Craven was not familiar with any talks about centralization of Tax Collector's. Mr. Steere advised that yes there have been meetings to centralize collections of all Taxes on a state level and not collected locally. This would eliminate Tax Collector and collections would be done by the state. Mr. Craven said he would look into this more and advise of us what he hears.

9. Changes to Fire District as it relates to Western Coventry

Mr. Craven stated that yes has started into looking into all Fire District and how they operate and that some changes may be coming in the future. Western Coventry is not like Chepachet Fire Distrist. The Chepachet Fire District does an annual audit and reconciles the books monthly and from what he has been told Western Coventry did not. There are other Fire Districts within the state that have more authority then the towns and can set the tax rates as they see fit and it in the voter's hand.

The next meeting will be the Monthly Meeting September 18th, 2013 at 6:30pm.

With no further business at this time, motion made by Mr. Lohr to adjourn, second by Mrs. Martone and passed 4-0. Meeting adjourned

at 7:43pm.

VOTER YES NO Abstaining
Earl K Newman, Chairman X
Robert Lohr, Vice Chairman X
George Leonhardt
Lynda Martone X
Eric Croft X

Respectfully submitted, ~~~~~
Darlene L Shields
Darlene L. Shields
District Clerk / Chepachet Fire District